



# Rowling series lives on through

# interactive website Pottermore

**Kristen Case**  
Design Chief

Mystery has surrounded J.K. Rowling's Pottermore since its creation in June.

The website, which builds upon Rowling's world of "Harry Potter," is a way for people who grew up alongside Potter and the rest of the characters to continue their experience. The books, reaching millions of people, made the best-seller list for substantial periods of time.

"I think the biggest thing was that Rowling's work rekindled an interest in reading for kids," said Amanda Sturgill, associate professor of communications. "Their popularity has meant that a lot of the millennial generation had the world of Harry Potter for a substantial part of their developing years, and I think that will mean some shared cultural ideas — inside jokes about house points and the like."

Pottermore allows users to see all the content that Rowling did not work into the books, about 18,000 words worth, a lot of which are background details about characters, places and setting information.

But it's not just a site for more content. It's also a way for "Potterheads," fans of the series,

to interact with other fans, a type of "Harry Potter" social network.

"I guess in a sense, it's a chance to return to a familiar friend of sorts or to not have to let the world of Potter go quite so quickly," Sturgill said.

Upon accessing the site, Pottermore users take a quiz to determine which house they are in and their layout colors change based on where they are sorted.

Beta users, the site's earliest users, currently have access to the first online book and can go through chapter-by-chapter to experience all the additional content that Rowling has for that book. Once the site opens to everyone else, users will have access to all seven books.

In addition to the content, members can do other things, such as make potions, which hinge on timing and the ability to follow directions and duel other users.

These activities earn users house-points, which determine which house wins the House Cup.

The website was, and still is, a very anticipated thing for many "Harry Potter" fans.

"I love Harry Potter," junior Lida Bard said. "It was never a question of whether or not I'd get a Pottermore account. It was just

a matter of when and if I'd get in the selected group of beta users, which luckily, I did."

But not all "Harry Potter" fans are planning on joining Pottermore, including senior Holly Taylor.

"I read the whole series and loved it," she said. "I won't get a Pottermore account because I'm not interested in playing online games. It just doesn't appeal to me."

Megan Isaac, associate professor of English, said she believes only the die-hard fans will spend much time on the site.

"One of the unfortunate aspects of a strong film is that the director's vision becomes the dominant visual interpretation of a book," she said. "Pottermore will appeal to readers who 'saw' Rowling's world in their own heads first and still want to explore all the nooks and crannies of it that were not included in the films. I don't think it will have much appeal, however, to people who only know Harry Potter through the films."

The readers who want to explore all those previously unknown parts of the Potterverse did not have it easy. Rowling made those who wanted beta access jump through a lot

of hoops to gain access.

After sending fans on a scavenger hunt for the web address, Rowling put up a project page at Pottermore.com, which linked to a custom interactive YouTube channel that featured a countdown. Access to this YouTube channel could also be found in the owls that gathered on various "Harry Potter" fan sites.

Rowling revealed what Pottermore was via a YouTube video June 23 and announced that a challenge to gain access would open July 31.

The Magic Quill Challenge allowed one million fans early access to the site. Every day for one week, a question appeared on the website for a limited amount of time.

The answers to these questions redirected seekers to a different website where they could locate the quill.

The sign-in button for Pottermore appeared Aug. 15 and a very small number of fans were allowed in to the site in its first several days. The last of the beta users were let in Sept. 27.

The site was set to be open to all users some time in October, but the beta period has been indefinitely extended to allow the creators to work out all of the website's kinks.

## Accuracy of the Sorting Hat

### Ravenclaw



**82,168 points**  
**164,480 members**

"I'm in Ravenclaw, I think I got put there because, although Ravenclaw's defining characteristic is that they are smart, they are also creative and eccentric which are two characteristics that I associate with. And after all, just look at Luna Lovegood, that's what house she's in and she's definitely both. I wanted to be in Gryffindor, but I think most people do because of Harry, Ron and Hermione. I ended up being happy to be in Ravenclaw."

-Lida Bard  
Junior

### Hufflepuff



**69,339 points**  
**183,820 members**

"I think I'm in Hufflepuff because I tend to prioritize those I love over anything else, and many friends have described me as 'loyal' and 'faithful.' J. K. Rowling apparently knew what she was doing."

-Katy Burns  
Senior

## Would you have found the Magical Quill?

Day 1: How many owls are on the Eeylops Owl Emporium sign?

Day 2: What is the number of the chapter in which Professor McGonagall cancels the Quidditch match between Gryffindor and Hufflepuff?

Day 3: In the Gryffindor vs. Slytherin Quidditch match in Harry's third year, how many points is Gryffindor leading by before Harry catches the Golden Snitch?

Day 4: How many students take part in the Triwizard Tournament during Harry's fourth year?

Day 5: What is the house number of the Headquarters for The Order of the Phoenix in Grimmauld Place?

Day 6: How many chapters are there in "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince"?

Day 7: How many Deathly Hallows are there?

Day 1: 5; Day 2: 14; Day 3: 60; Day 4: 4; Day 5: 12; Day 6: 30; Day 7: 3